



**Woodhouse Parish
Neighbourhood Plan 2020- 2036
Referendum version
August 2021**

Telephony

153. Woodhouse has a Grade II Listed telephone kiosk, decommissioned by BT a few years ago. Woodhouse Eaves has a live telephone kiosk.
154. Mobile phone signals can be poor, depending on the provider, and there are some absolute black spots for both phone and broadband. As granite and forestry are prevalent within the parish, universal access to good signals is possibly a difficult problem to resolve.
155. There are several mobile phone masts, one is part of the recently updated emergency network. None is particularly visible enough to spoil a view. Nationally, there are moves to force providers to share masts. A recent application for another mast appears to have been put on hold. One of the outlying dwellings moved to a satellite link as broadband providers were unable to improve the situation. Other outliers struggle with slow or intermittent signals. Meanwhile, the local educational establishments benefit from sharing the Joint Academic Network, which is not available to the general public.
156. The parish had volunteers who set up their own broadband network and some have continued to support local people during and beyond the more recent expansion of broadband to the parish that was/is coordinated by the county council.

POLICY BE7: BROADBAND AND MOBILE PHONE INFRASTRUCTURE - Proposals to provide access to superfast broadband (high speed internet) for the Parish will be supported.

Every individual dwelling in new housing developments should have a connection installed capable of supplying broadband operation at download speeds of at least 30 megabit (or equivalent extant minimum standard) and upload speeds of at least 10 megabit (or equivalent extant minimum standard) or better to reflect higher minimum speeds that may be recommended through the lifetime of the Plan. Connections for new developments of more than three properties, should aim to not impact unduly on existing users.

Improvements to the mobile telecommunication network that will serve the Parish will be supported. Where new masts are installed, these should be shared where possible by more than one provider.

Any infrastructure improvements, possibly requiring above ground network installations, must be sympathetically located and designed to integrate into the landscape, i.e. not be in or near to open landscapes.

3.3 Transport and traffic

157. It should be noted that Leicestershire County Council is responsible for highway matters. Between the two settlements there are three direct routes and one circuitous road route. The 3 direct routes run parallel to each other and are, from North to South:
- 1 Beacon Road/Forest Road is the most direct all-weather route. It provides a through route for Soar valley village residents to Junction 22 of the M1 and very well used. The steep hill from the Beacon and the bends in the lower part make for potentially hazardous combinations, particularly for Vulnerable Road Users (walkers, horse riders, cyclists and

the disabled). Nevertheless, many continue to use it for lack of alternatives.

The footway provision is normally only on one side of the road but changes sides, so pedestrians have to cross and re-cross the road, often near bends where there are poor sightlines. The footway between Woodhouse and Quorn is particularly narrow and inconveniently changes sides at the parish boundary and reverts back at the railway bridge.

The speed limits also change several times, with 3 stretches of National Speed Limit interspersed with 40 and 30mph stretches in the villages.

- 2 Footpath K6 runs from Main Street, Woodhouse Eaves to School Lane, Woodhouse. It is a rural footpath with kissing gates to contain stock. It can be muddy in wet weather and the kissing-gates can be awkward for parents/ guardians with pushchairs as well as a barrier to the disabled. Footpath K16 is a branch off this footpath which comes out on Forest Road roughly half-way between the villages.
- 3 Meadow Road beside the Primary School leads on to a hedge-side track (known locally as a 'green lane') that continues to Brand Lane/School Lane. The exit at Brand Lane is separated from School Lane by a sharp left bend with no footway.

It has a gate at each end. A section near Woodhouse can be particularly wet due to either ruts created by heavy farm vehicles or the vestigial remains of ridge and furrow.

- 4 The circuitous road route is Main Street and Brand Hill (both 30mph) and then left along Brand Lane to School Lane, Woodhouse. Brand Lane has several bends. It does have a usable verge on most of its West side, provided this is kept free of overhanging branches (by the landowners) and mown regularly (by the council). It carries farm traffic as well as vehicles using it as a route to Swithland and the other pair of country parks (Swithland Woods and Bradgate Park).

158. Whilst tree planting in general is to be encouraged, including in hedgerows, when considering any tree planting on verges, trees should provide 3m headroom for the safety of walkers, horse riders and *in extremis* cyclists. Rural verges provide a refuge for vulnerable road users, increasingly important owing to the rise in electric (silent) vehicles, as separation from traffic along country roads may not always be possible.

159. The whole length of the main B road through the settlements has seen many collisions, in the past four decades, over 60 collisions in the parish were fatal. The parish Traffic Watch Group and Parish Council have successfully campaigned to reduce speeding in collaboration with police, highways, Borough and other agencies. A trial of average speed cameras began in 2019.

POLICY T1: TRAFFIC FLOW & VOLUME MANAGEMENT - With particular regard to the rural highway network within the Woodhouse Neighbourhood Plan area and the need to mitigate increases in vehicular traffic, all new residential and commercial development should aim to;

a) Be designed to minimize additional traffic generation and mitigate congestion through the villages. Development that could significantly increase traffic flows should be accompanied by appropriate traffic impact assessments and should include appropriate mitigation measures to

address the potential for congestion.

b) Not reduce existing off-road parking provisions without providing appropriate alternative provisions which should accord with the Highway Authority's extant standards.

c) Have regard to the Highway Authority's role in maintaining and improving all elements of the highway network and liaise with that body to ensure that existing footpaths, cycle ways and statutory rights of way are maintained and improved where necessary.

Parking

160. Both consultation events raised parking as one of the most important issues for the community and noted problems at several pinch points in the village. There are large car parks at the lower and upper Beacon Country Park, a small one on Beacon Road for access to Broombriggs and Windmill Hill which is extended for events, one at The Outwoods with extra parking along part of the roadside, at St Paul's Church, at St Mary's Church, at the Parish hall, at Maplewell Hall School and St Paul's School, at Welbeck DSFC and Beaumanor Hall, at the little nursery on Church Hill, and all four pubs have large car parks. Neither the Baptist nor Methodist halls have any car parking. Many older houses do not have provision for off street parking and residents therefore park on the street. The junction of Maplewell Road and Main Street is a particular problem. This is largely due to vehicles being parked whilst using the corner shop and/or the chemist. Delivery vehicles to both premises exacerbate this problem. There is no signage directing visitors to the full range of places to park, and walking groups can simply turn up and take over a proportion of the parish hall parking, often before schoolchildren or community activity groups arrive for events in the Parish Council halls.

POLICY T2: PUBLIC CAR PARKING - Development proposals that would result in the loss of off-street car parking would only be acceptable where:

a) It can be clearly demonstrated that there is no longer any potential for the continued use of the land for car parking and that the loss of parking will not aggravate an existing shortfall of spaces in the vicinity; or

b) Adequate and convenient replacement car parking spaces will be provided elsewhere in the vicinity.

Proposals for a new/extended public car park in the village at a suitable location will be supported..

Electric Vehicles

161. Given recent government targets to combat rising levels of air pollution and climate change, we expect to see an increasing number of electric vehicles and this is welcomed in the parish. With ever increasing demands on battery performance charging electric vehicles is a major obstacle to be overcome, although there are early indications of developments in wireless charging. Encouraging high power chargers to reduce charging time is vital, however at present this solution is only properly available to dwellings and